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Message Text

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16
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 A-01 OPR-02 EB-07 OMB-01 FAA-00

COME-00 OC-05 CCO-00 DOTE-00 SSO-00 /101 W
---------- 033638
P 010550Z AUG 75
FM AMCONSUL ASMARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3478
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON PRIORITY
COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN PRIORITY
COMIDEASTFOR PRIORITY
NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA PRIORITY

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI PRIORITY
CNO WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0655

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS ET
SUBJECT: CALM RETURNS TO ASMARA

1. THE COMMERCIAL AND SOCIAL LIFE OF ASMARA IS SLOWLY RETURNING TO ITS NORMALLY SUBDUED ACTIVITY AS THERE HAVE BEEN NO SERIOUS INCIDENTS INITIATED BY EITHER ELF/PLF OR EPMG FORCES SINCE JULY 25. LIKEWISE THERE HAS BEEN NO MILITARY ACTIVITY IN ASMARA VICINITY DURING SAME PERIOD. THE PREVAILING CALM IN ASMARA IS ATTRIBUTED BY MANY SOURCES TO AD HOC DEMONSTRATION SATURDAY OF ABOUT 200 MUSLIM WOMEN WHO MARCHED ON HEADQUARTERS OF GENERAL GETACHEW, REGIONAL MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR, DEMANDING CESSATION
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OF RANDOM EXECUTION OF THEIR SONS BY EPMG SECURITY FORCES. WOMEN

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AGGRESSIVELY REJECTED GETACHEW'S ALLEGATION THAT TROUBLE
STEMMED FROM ELF/PLF ACTIONS COUNTERING THAT EPMG KILLINGS WERE
FORCING YOUNG MEN INTO ARMS OF ELF/PLF. THEY FINALLY WRUNG AGREE-
MENT FROM GENERAL TO CONSIDER THEIR PLEAS. THIS INCIDENT AND ITS
AFTER EFFECTS WAS ALSO CONFIRMED BY MOFA OFFICE IN ASMARA.

2. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON OTHER THAN MILITARY-ESCORTED COMMERCIAL
CONVOY REMAIN IN EFFECT. MITIGATING THIS SITUATION, HOWEVER,
HAS BEEN COMMENCEMENT OF ASMARA-MASSAWA EAL FLIGHTS DEPARTING THREE
TIMES A WEEK. NO SPECIAL PERMISSION IS REQUIRED FOR THESE FLIGHTS.
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MOFA LINKED TRAVEL AND OTHER PETTY (E.G.
BICYCLE BAN) EXISTING RESTRICTIONS TO OAU CONFERENCE, SPECULATING
THAT THEY MAY BE EASED AFTER CONCLUSION OF KAMPALA MEETING.

3. ONLY INCIDENT WHICH HAS RUFFLED PREVAILING CALM WAS ARREST
TUESDAY OF ITALIAN CITIZEN WHO IS MANAGER OF SAVON AND RIES,
RESPECTED LOCAL FIRM. ARREST IS LINKED TO INDISCREET RADIO CONVER-
SATIONS BETWEEN COMPANY PERSONNEL AND ETHIOPIAN LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS,
WHO ARE PROVIDED CONTRACT SUPPORT BY SAVON AND RIES.
SHERRY

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